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Bangalore Mirror

TEMP Max 28 | Min 22 | Humidity 74% Scattered Thunderstorms Sensex 74,005 | Nifty 22,502 | Gold 73,750 | Silver 91,149 | Dollar 83.30 | Euro 90.75 | GBP 105.83

CLASS SUSPENSE

No clarity on academic fate of fifth, eighth, and ninth grade students

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ADVENTURE TRIP

Tragedy during zipline activity puts focus on adventure sports' safety measures

PAGE 3

Number of canopy management teams increased to 28 and they attended to 17,948 cases between April 2023 and March 2024

SHEAR DELIGHT

Hundreds of requests to cut trees, trim branches reach officials

Garima Prasher
garima.prasher
@timesgroup.com

TWEETS @BangaloreMIRROR

Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike's (BBMP) tree canopy management team has become busier over the last few years.

Information on cases attended by 28 canopy management teams across the city shows that these numbers are rising exponentially every year.

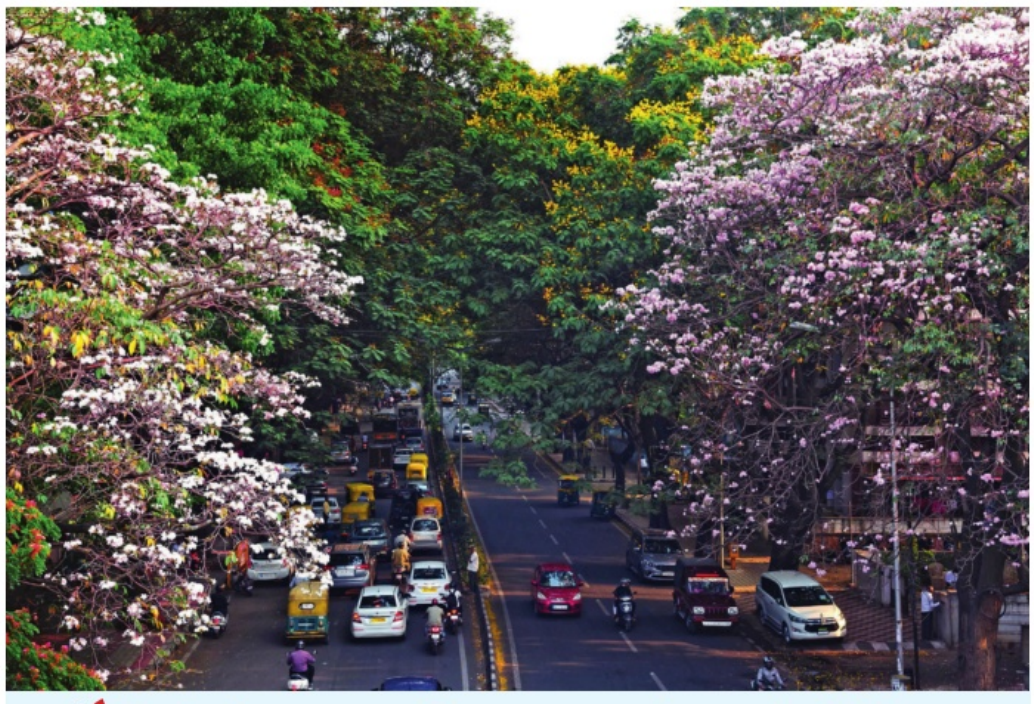
While 15 teams across all the BBMP zones received 7,472 complaints between April 2020 and March 2021, the number went up to 12,107 between April 2021 and March 2022. The civic agency increased the number of teams to 21 in this time duration. Last year, the number of the canopy management team was increased to 28 and they attended to 17,948 canopy management cases between April 2023 and March 2024.

According to a member of the Tree Expert Committee (TEC), a large number of these cases are requests for trimming branches and trees from citizens.

"The number of canopy management team and staff has grown over these years, leading to a higher number of cases that they are attending.

However, many applications TEC has been receiving for trimming branches are from citizens. We get hundreds of requests from Bengalureans to cut trees or trim branches despite these trees being in their prime health. These requests are raised based on reasons such as nuisance due to wildlife and birds, and tree litter. In the recent past the number of such requests due to wildlife such as monkeys and snakes on trees has gone up," said a member of TEC.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 6 »



"Most of our avenue trees are exotic species that are very fast-growing trees and attain maturity much earlier than native species. Their root system is not as strong as native trees. Thus their branches are more susceptible to breaking and falling during moderate wind speed

— C Nagarajaiah, University Of Agricultural Sciences (GKVK)

Shower brings sewage in

As parts of city likely to experience rain in coming days, complaints of infra collapse already begin to crop up

Rachana Ramesh
c-rachana.ramesh@timesgroup.com

TWEETS @BangaloreMIRROR

At present, the city is experiencing a wet pre-monsoon season, with many areas experiencing frequent spells of rain. The Indian Meteorological Department (IMD) has issued a yellow alert. The weather is expected to remain the same for the next few days. According to the forecast by IMD, the temperature is expected to range from 23 degrees Celsius to 29 degrees Celsius, with a generally cloudy sky followed by one or two spells of rain or thundershowers on May 20.

On May 21, the temperature is likely to rise to a range of 23 degrees Celsius to 31 degrees Celsius while the cloudy sky and intermittent rain or thundershowers will continue to remain. On May 22, temperatures are likely to increase further to a range of 23 degrees Celsius to 33 degrees Celsius. For May 23 and 24, temperatures will remain between 23 degrees Celsius and 33 degrees Celsius, with the sky remaining partly cloudy and with the possibility of rain or thunderstorms.

Flooding in Yelahanka

Residents of NorthWood Villa in Yelahanka experienced severe flooding after the night's rain. They have alleged that the flooding was a result of storm water drain

CONTINUED ON PAGE 8 »

3 THINGS TO DO

01 Melodic jam

Join in for an evening of electrifying performances at Melodic Madness! Featuring top artists from around the country, this musical extravaganza promises a night of unforgettable melodies and high-energy entertainment. Perfect for music enthusiasts of all ages, this event celebrates diverse musical genres and talent. **When- May 19**
Where- Hyatt Centric, MG Road

02 Cinema talk

Calling all cinema enthusiasts! Join in for the Movie Buff Meet-up, an exciting event dedicated to film lovers. Engage in lively discussions, trivia, and activities centred around your favourite movies. Network with fellow movie buffs, share your passion for cinema and enjoy an evening of film appreciation. **When- May 23**
Where- SmallWorld, Koramangala

03 Open mic night

Get ready for an evening of laughter and creativity at "Whose Mic Is It Anyway?" - Open Mic Nights. This event features a diverse lineup of stand-up comedians, poets, and musicians showcasing their talents. Whether you're a performer or a spectator, enjoy a night filled with spontaneous performances and great entertainment. **When- May 25**
Where- Dialogues Cafe, JP Nagar

28L students worried about academic fate

Fifth, eighth, and ninth graders face uncertainty as the new academic year approaches; Education Department seeks legal counsel to resolve the impasse

Sridhar Vivan
sridhar.vivan
@timesgroup.com

TWEETS @sridharvMirror

With the new academic year just a fortnight away, students who took exams in the fifth, eighth, and ninth grades remain uncertain about their academic future. The Education Department has instructed schools to promote all students, except those in these grades, to the next grade for the 2024-25 academic year. However, the fate of fifth, eighth, and ninth graders is uncertain due to a court stay on the results of the March exams. Consequently, schools have been directed not to upload these students' results to the data portal.

A staggering number of students, totalling 28,14,104, are currently awaiting clarity regarding their academic future. Among them, there are 9,30,715 fifth-grade students, 9,35,076 eighth-grade students, and 9,48,313 ninth-grade students who recently appeared for their respective exams. These students are spread across a vast network of 69,137 schools. As a result, students in these grades are worried about their promotion to the next grade. The department's decision has caused confusion among students, parents, and teachers. The education department's next step is unclear, leaving thousands of students in a state of uncertainty.

Aarav, an eighth-grade student, said, "I'm really stressed out because I don't know if I'll be moving to the next grade. My friends and I have been studying hard all year, and now we're stuck waiting for the decision. It's frustrating because I was looking forward to starting 9th grade and preparing for my board exams. Now, I'm worried that all our efforts might go to waste, and we don't even have a clear timeline for when this will be resolved. My parents keep asking the school for updates, but they don't have any answers either. It's a really confusing and uncertain time for all of us."

> **"My parents keep asking the school for updates, but they don't have answers either. It's a really confusing and uncertain time for all of us**
> – Aarav, an 8th grade student

Meera, a fifth-grade student, added, "I feel very anxious because I don't know if I will be promoted to the 6th grade. All my friends and I have been waiting for our results, but now there's this court stay, and we have no idea what's going to happen. My teachers can't give us any information, and my parents are worried too. I just want to know if I can move forward with my studies or if I'll have to repeat the year. It's hard to concentrate on anything else when my whole academic future is up in the air. This uncertainty is making it really hard for me to stay motivated."

The department's decision not to promote students in the 5th, 8th, and 9th grades has raised many questions. How will these students be promoted to the next grade? How will they get their transfer certificates? The department's silence on this issue has added to the anxiety of students, parents, and teachers.

Reacting to this, BB Kaveri, the Public Education Department Commissioner, said, "This is a unique case that the Education Department has encountered for the first time. We are currently consulting with legal experts to address this issue. Every possible effort is being made to find a solution."

Mobile food banks feed Bengaluru's needy

Y Maheswara Reddy
c-y.reddy@timesgroup.com

TWEETS @BangaloreMIRROR

Around 300 people in need of a meal wait in a queue every day near Sri Satyanarayana Swamy Temple in Gandhinagar. These individuals, especially daily wage earners and the unemployed, have been served lunch free of cost since March 31, thanks to a mobile food bank. This initiative was launched by the Atria Foundation, which is working to ensure that no one goes hungry in Bengaluru. With the success of the initiative, called Love All, at Gandhinagar, the Atria Foundation has made arrangements to launch two more mobile food banks—one near St Martha's Hospital on Nrupathunga Road and another near Gosha Hospital on Venkataswamy Road in Shivajinagar. The target beneficiaries are the attendees or relatives who accompany patients to the hospitals and cannot afford lunch.

"We began serving needy people during the lockdown by utilising canteen staff at our educational institute for cooking and supplying food. Within a couple of days, we succeeded in supplying 5,000 meals per day, and in a week, we were supplying 1,50,000 meals per day. Later, a few hoteliers joined hands with us. We utilised community halls to open 20 kitchens in Bengaluru during the lockdown," said Arun Kumar of the Atria Foundation.

He said the Love All initiative was the brainchild of Atria Group Managing Director C. Sunder Raju. "Our objective is to have 300 mobile food banks across the city by the end of 2025. We are also collecting leftover food from Radisson Blu Hotel and Madras Engineer Group (MEG) and ASC Center and distributing it to the needy people in nearby slums."

Appreciating the Atria Foundation for supplying lunch to the needy people in Gandhinagar, Chandra Singh Ajay, president of the Sri Satyanarayana Swamy Temple Cab Drivers' Association, said that he has encountered many people without food on the streets of Gandhinagar. "One needs Rs 50 to Rs 60 for sambar rice and Rs 100 for dosa in the Majestic area. I am very happy that many people are availing of lunch free of cost. There are occasions when people wait in a queue long before the mobile food bank arrives. We help people to wait in a queue and also ensure cleanliness here. The menu changes daily," said Ajay.

Sri Satyanarayana Swamy Temple manager Venkatesh U said that he made arrangements for drinking water. "They are doing a noble service for the needy people. I am also helping them to ensure cleanliness at the spot. I have requested the BBMP Solid Waste Management Department to keep a garbage auto tipper here. The beneficiaries, after having lunch, can throw disposable plates into the garbage auto tipper," said Venkatesh.

People in queue outside the food bank

Zipline tragedy puts sports safety in focus

Call for stricter guidelines for adventure sports after death of woman at resort

Sridhar.Vivan
@timesgroup.com
TWEETS @sridharvMIRROR

PIC FOR ILLUSTRATIVE PURPOSES ONLY

With summer holidays in full swing, many people are heading to resorts for adventure activities. However, this raises a crucial question: how safe are these activities? In a tragic incident, a 35-year-old woman named Ranjini from Attibele died while attempting a zip line activity at a resort in Ramanagara district on Sunday. She was part of a group of 18 people on a day's outing. According to the police, Ranjini's accident occurred during the zip line activity, and a case has been registered at the Harohalli police station. A post-mortem examination has been conducted, and her body has been handed over to her family.

This incident serves as a stark reminder of the importance of stringent safety measures, especially for adventure activities. The resort management and authorities are now likely to face scrutiny regarding whether adequate safety protocols were in place and if the tragedy could have been prevented.

A few years ago, three naval personnel lost their lives in two separate incidents involving a paramotor and a power glider. Additionally, there have been casualties in skydiving accidents where individuals have plummeted to their deaths because their parachutes failed to open in time. These incidents underscore the inherent risks associated with adventure activities and highlight the critical need for rigorous safety protocols and equipment checks to prevent such tragedies.

Sree Kumar, an adventure enthusiast, emphasized, "All adventure sports inherently carry some risk, but with necessary precautions and expert guidance, they continue to thrive worldwide.

It's time for the State Government to step in and regulate adventure sports, especially in resorts. Developing and enforcing specific regulations for these activities, including safety standards, equipment requirements, and staff training, is crucial. A licensing system for resorts offering adventure sports, coupled with mandatory certification for operators and staff, should be introduced. Regular safety inspections of resorts and adventure sports facilities are necessary to ensure compliance with these regulations."

Kumar continued, "The government should ensure that resorts adhere to industry standards for equipment, safety protocols, and staff training. Establishing a system for investigating incidents and accidents and taking prompt action against non-compliant resorts is vital. Both the government and resorts should work together to educate the public on the importance of safety in adventure sports and the need to choose reputable and licensed establishments. It's essential to regularly review and update regulations to keep them effective and relevant."

> **"The adventure travel industry in India is largely unorganised. Out of the 30-plus adventure clubs, about 10 don't even have a qualified instructor**

Trek casualties

There have been numerous casualties during treks as well, with experts attributing the increase in incidents to a lack of awareness among participants. Ashok Raj, a travel operator, remarked, "The adventure travel industry in India is largely unorganised. Out of the 30-plus adventure clubs, about 10 don't even have a qualified instructor. This lack of regulation is concerning." He continued, "I've suggested to the tourism department to implement a licensing system that certifies only professional firms to undertake adventure activities." Raj stressed the need for stricter oversight and standardisation within the industry. "Regulating the industry through a licensing system would ensure that only those with proper training and qualifications can offer these activities. This would reduce the risks involved," he said.

Rider gets in trouble for petrol tank pillion stunt

In a concerning incident that came to light via an Instagram post, a two-wheeler rider was seen riding with a girl precariously seated on the petrol tank of the bike. The rider has been identified as 21-year-old Silambarasen.

He is a resident of MV Layout, Shampura. He works as a cab driver.

The police have registered a case against Silambarasen for his reckless behavior. The charges include Section 279 of the IPC (rash driving or riding on a public way) and multiple sections of the Indian Motor Vehicles Act, namely Sections 184 (dangerous driving), 189 (riding without reasonable safety measures), 129 (riding without helmets), and 177 (general provision for punishment of offenses). The vehicle has been seized, and further action will be pursued under Section 107 of the CRPC, as stated by the Deputy Commissioner of Police (DCP) for Traffic North Bengaluru.

Cyber-extortionist caught in police net

The Goa cyber crime police arrested Bengaluru resident Mohan Raj V, 29, for allegedly cyberbullying and extorting a woman through a fake job ad.

The victim, from Goa, reported that Mohan Raj had posted a fraudulent job ad for an international bank, leading her to an online interview where impostors coerced her into undressing, recording the act.

Mohan Raj then blackmailed her for sexual favors, threatening to release the footage if she didn't comply.

Superintendent of Police Rahul Gupta's team set a trap in Bengaluru and arrested Mohan Raj, who confessed. Chats and videos were recovered for cyber forensic analysis.

Smuggler arrested with city police help

The Kerala Police, with the assistance of its Karnataka counterpart, have arrested a 29-year-old Congolese national, in connection with an international drug smuggling ring.

Rengara Paul was apprehended in Madiwala, Bengaluru, by a team led by Ernakulam Rural Police Chief Vaibhav Saxena and the Bengaluru Mico Layout police, according to a statement issued by the police here on Sunday. **BMB**

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Lake rejuvenation: 35 bags of trash collected

NGO leads a successful cleanup drive, collecting 35 bags of trash and calling for more trash cans

Y Maheswara Reddy
c-y.reddy@timesgroup.com
TWEETS @BangaloreMIRROR

View of the Agara Lake; Inset: Volunteers are seen with the trash collected at the lake on Sunday

Around 20 volunteers joined hands to clean up Agara Lake on Sunday. They cleared plastic from around the water body, providing much-needed relief for both the lake and the people who visit it for morning and evening walks. Garbage littered around the lake had been an eyesore for visitors.

The volunteers belong to the St Broseph Foundation, a non-governmental organisation founded by Dushyant Dubey. The foundation strives for women's empowerment, civic and legal awareness, mental health support, student issues, legal support, career counselling, and support for victims of domestic violence.

Uma Tejaswi, Community Manager, said she works closely with Dushyant to support victims, especially women, in all cases, taking them to police stations, filing FIRs, assisting in court, and other activities in Bengaluru. "As the Community Manager, I oversee all 12 chapter WhatsApp groups and coordinate with our volunteers, who number around 7,000 in Bengaluru. We frequently conduct lake cleanups, such as the recent efforts at Halanayakanahalli Lake by our Sarjapur volunteers and Munnekolala Lake by our Whitefield volunteers. The latest cleanup today was at Agara Lake, spearheaded by our Koramangala volunteers," said Uma.

> "During our efforts, it began to rain, but our dedication remained unwavering. Our team is committed to making a difference in the rejuvenation of lakes
> – Uma Tejaswi, Community manager

The cleanup drive at Agara Lake began at 8 am on Sunday. The volunteers collected 35 bags of trash in two hours, significantly improving cleanliness around the water body. "We noted the absence of trash cans around the lake, which contributes to the litter problem. It would be useful if the authorities provided trash cans at the lake. During our efforts, it began to rain, but our dedication remained unwavering. Our team is committed to making a substantial difference in the rejuvenation of lakes, driven by our passion to be true change-makers, especially amid the water crisis Bengaluru faces today," she said.

Manu Shanker, Chapter Head, Koramangala, said he noticed a significant amount of litter around Agara Lake. "I stay in BTM Layout. I have noticed litter around the lake while passing through the adjacent road," said Manu Shanker.

Tejas, who resides in HSR Layout, said he also noticed garbage around the lake while passing through the nearby road.

Domlur residents rally against plastic pollution

Iffath Fathima
Iffath.Fathima@timesgroup.com
TWEETS @BangaloreMIRROR

Keeping up with the recent plastic ban awareness campaign led by Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike (BBMP), residents of Domlur Layout took to the streets on Saturday, working towards cleaner streets and reducing banned plastic use, in support of the BBMP campaign. They have been conducting monthly drives for a year and a half now, striving for a litter-free, plastic-free layout. Previously, the focus was on cleaner streets and less litter, which resulted in a lot of mixed waste being generated.

Odette Katrak, an active Domlur volunteer driving ongoing volunteer campaigns, said, "When I returned to live in Domlur after 15 years, two years ago, the amount of litter and plastic was high, so I kicked off the monthly drives to involve more residents to make a difficult job easier—and we have many coming forward to support the ongoing initiative. The current focus is to have clean streets while also reducing waste to landfill, emphasising proper segregation, zero use of plastic bags in waste disposal by households, and working with vendors for compliance with both the plastic ban and segregation." The drive's focus was on plastic segregation in line with the BBMP anti-plastic campaign.

Volunteers at the plastic ban awareness campaign

Residents visited shops known for their good reputation of never using banned plastic and appreciated them. Milk vendor Manjunath said, "Our shop has proved that you don't lose customers if you don't give plastic bags; instead, they remember to carry their own."

> "The current focus is to have clean streets while also reducing waste to landfill, emphasising proper segregation
> – Odette Katrak, an active volunteer

The use of biodegradable bags was noted, and the store was warned that this is not permitted. This is an area of confusion for many. "We spotted improper disposal by two shops—mixed waste left in an open bin by a juice shop, and mixed waste by a mobile shop in a banned plastic black garbage bag, including leftover food in plastic containers. Marshals fined both. We were told about a general store that sells plastic bags in bulk. On visiting, we found his stock had already been confiscated two days earlier. He was using plastic straws and fined for the same," added Odette. While the volunteers were planning their next strategy to get customers to carry their own bags, they spotted a man spitting on the road. Marshals explained the rules and immediately fined him. To his question of why he was fined when 100 people were spitting, the reply was, "Wherever we see, we immediately fine." Relevant BBMP posters were also shown to confirm that spitting is a punishable offence.

Satish, another volunteer, added, "We are seeing a slow change and will continue our efforts. Today, we ensured to appreciate those vendors who are following the plastic ban because it makes them happy and hopefully will motivate others to stop using banned items."

M Baktha Seelan, Marshall Supervisor, said, "We are instructed to continue both awareness and enforcement as part of the Plastic Drive citywide campaign. In Domlur Layout, because of active volunteers, we can do this in a way that vendors understand."

Odette pointed out that at the end of the awareness drive, a message was reinforced: there are consequences for using banned items, not disposing of waste correctly.

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Scrap collection

Narayanapura

Scrap dealers are using the area near the electric tower by NCC Maple Heights in Narayanapura as a storage place. This is located before the Mahadevapura Bus Stop towards Marathahalli, after Lowry College.

Garbage dump

Kadugondanahalli

Garbage is being dumped daily in front of the houses on 3rd Stage. Despite repeated complaints to the authorities to put up "Don't Throw Garbage Here" signs, the pleas have been ignored. As a result, there is a severe menace of rats and mosquitoes in the area.

Debris dilemma

CV Raman Nagar

Work on the drainage near CAIR, Kaggadasapura Main Road, CV Raman Nagar, has come to a halt, and debris is piled up along the road.

NGT picks holes in BBMP's all's-well lake claims

Melvin Mathew
c-melvin.mathew
@timesgroup.com
TWEETS @BangaloreMIRROR

The National Green Tribunal (NGT) has highlighted contradictory statements regarding Yelle Mallappa Shetty Lake in a report filed by the Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike (BBMP) in January this year. The BBMP and Minor Irrigation were warned of being charged with dereliction of duty.

In an embarrassing situation for the BBMP, the NGT pulled it up, regarding its claims made about improvements to the lake. The NGT observed that BBMP had filed that debris had been removed, fencing had been done, and marshals had been appointed to monitor unlawful dumping in its January report. However, the learned counsel appearing for the applicant furnished some photographs showcasing continued dumping and construction debris being brought in.

The court asked BBMP to file an updated status report on it and warned it that it would be charged with dereliction of duty if it failed to comply with the 2021 orders. The court noted that if the 2021 orders are not complied with despite the miscellaneous application, it would be deemed as dereliction of duty by BBMP officials and the Minor Irrigation Department and a penalty would be imposed on the officers in charge.

File photo of Yele Mallappa Shetty Lake

The Karnataka State Pollution Control Board has also been asked to file a report from conducting a spot inspection.

Lake activists also noted that BBMP's claims are completely false. "The debris hasn't been removed and instead more debris is being dumped here. Fencing work is still ongoing and has not reached the whole periphery. It's happening in phases. There is work ongoing at the north-east and southern side. The stretch where debris is being dumped has not been covered. Sewage is still entering the lake and marshals have not been deputed to monitor the activities. Encroachments on the lake are yet to be removed," said Subhajit of Medahalli Rising.

Despite the apathy of BBMP, lake activists are taking up a cleaning drive. "We are planning to take up a cleaning drive on May 25 around Yelle Mallappa Shetty Lake to clear the plastic bottles and other forms of waste. We are also planning to clear the stormwater drains and have sought BBMP's help to provide us with earth movers," he added.

Tale of Metros in 2 cities

We look at how Metro service in Bengaluru is finding more takers despite the Shakthi scheme, unlike scene in Hyderabad

Sridhar.Vivan
@timesgroup.com
TWEETS @sridharvMIRROR

To accommodate rising number of passengers, BMRCL is introducing more six-coach metro trains

Bengaluru and Hyderabad are always in competition, whether it's in infrastructure projects or the establishment of new companies. Currently, the two cities are being compared once again, this time in terms of public transport. There has been buzz that the promoter of Hyderabad's Metro, L&T, may exit the country's first private Metro network by 2026 due to a significant reduction in ridership. The promoter had alleged that the Telangala Congress government's decision to provide free bus travel had resulted in dip in Metro commuters. In contrast, Bengaluru, which initiated free bus travel around a year ago, has experienced a rise in Metro ridership despite the free bus scheme.

Despite the launch of the Shakthi scheme in June 2023, which offers free bus rides to women, the Metro ridership in Bengaluru has continued to show an overall increasing trend. This indicates a sustained or growing preference for Metro travel among commuters. Following the introduction of the Shakthi scheme, Metro ridership increased from 1.81 lakh in June 2023 to 1.89 lakh in July 2023, and further to 1.93 lakh in August 2023, despite the availability of free bus rides for women. September 2023 saw a dip to 1.76 lakh, which could be attributed to various factors such as seasonal variations, holidays, or changes in commuter preferences. However, this was followed by a significant rise in the subsequent months, reaching 1.98 lakh in October 2023, 1.99 lakh in November 2023, and 2.13 lakh in December 2023.

An official said, "From October 2023 to February 2024, ridership remained relatively high, peaking at 2.40 lakh in February 2024. This indicates a strong, consistent usage of the Metro system even with alternative transportation options available. There was a slight decline in March 2024 to 2.09 lakh and further to 2.00 lakh in April 2024. This could be due to seasonal changes, temporary disruptions, or other external factors influencing commuter behaviour. The increasing ridership of the Metro despite the Shakthi scheme's launch demonstrates the Metro's resilience and its essential role in Bengaluru's public transportation network."

According to the official, the Metro offers a reliable and faster alternative to buses, which can be affected by traffic congestion. It also covers key areas that may not be as accessible by bus, providing convenience to commuters. "While the Shakti scheme targets women, the overall demographic using the Metro includes a significant number of men and other commuters who might prefer the Metro for its efficiency. The data suggests that while the Shakti scheme provides a valuable service, the Metro remains a crucial and growing mode of transportation for the broader population in Bengaluru. Continued investment and expansion of the Metro network could further bolster its ridership and complement the city's comprehensive public transport strategy."

Suresh Gowda, an analyst, said, "This divergence in outcomes highlights the dynamics at play in the two cities' transport systems. It could be attributed to factors such as reliability and speed of the Metro, its coverage of key areas, and the overall demographic preferences. The contrasting experiences underscore the importance of understanding local commuting patterns and preferences when implementing public transport policies."

Shakthi scheme keeps everybody in mind: DKS

Reacting to PM Narendra Modi's claim criticising free bus travel scheme, Deputy Chief Minister DK Shivakumar said on Sunday, "The Prime Minister lacks information on Shakthi scheme and hence he has said that the scheme has impacted revenues of Bengaluru metro. Namma metro has earned a revenue of Rs 130 crore in the last one year. Footfalls too have gone up by 30% for the same period. Bengaluru metro is limited to Bengaluru, while Shakthi scheme is rolled out keeping in mind people from across the State. I would like to convey to the PM that the KSRTC and Bengaluru metro are being run efficiently while offering Shakthi scheme to women. Women are doing 60 lakh trips per day in Karnataka."

> **Differences in experiences show importance of understanding local commuting patterns and preferences when implementing public transport policies** –Suresh Gowda, analyst

Fire in flight engine forces emergency landing

An Air India Express flight bound for Kochi was forced to make an emergency landing shortly after takeoff from Bengaluru's Kempegowda International Airport due to an engine flame. The flight, carrying 150 passengers and crew members, took off at 10:30 am but soon encountered a serious issue with its right engine.

According to eyewitness accounts and reports from ground services, "flames were observed emanating from the aircraft's right engine shortly after takeoff. The pilots immediately decided to return to Bengaluru as a precautionary measure."

Upon landing, the airport's ground services confirmed the presence of flames, prompting an immediate evacuation. "Air India Express has confirmed that the crew successfully conducted the evacuation, and no injuries were reported among the passengers or crew members."

An Air India Express spokesperson addressed the incident, stating, "We regret the inconvenience this has caused and are working to provide alternative arrangements for our guests to reach their destination as soon as possible. A thorough investigation with the regulator shall be accomplished to establish the cause."

Passengers were taken to a safe location within the airport terminal, where they received refreshments and updates about their travel arrangements. Alternative flights and accommodations are being arranged to ensure that all passengers reach Kochi as soon as possible.

The Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) has been notified, and a detailed investigation into the cause of the engine fire will be conducted. Initial assessments indicate that the quick response from both the flight crew and airport emergency services helped avert what could have been a more serious incident.

This event underscores the importance of rigorous maintenance checks and the effectiveness of emergency protocols. Air India Express has assured passengers that safety remains their top priority and that all necessary steps will be taken to prevent similar incidents in the future. **–ANI**

Fish kill at Hesaraghatta lake

Hesaraghatta Lake, once the lifeline of Bengaluru, now tells a somber tale. BM reader V Selvarajan who is also the Chairman of Green Circle Yelahanka, shared with Bangalore Mirror, "During a birding walk today, I discovered thousands of dead fish along the eastern bank of Hesaraghatta Lake. These fish belong to a species called Pentius, commonly known as Barb. Many were seen making desperate final jumps. The reason for this mass death remains unclear. Dead fish were scattered along a long stretch. I suspect, though I'm not certain, that they may have washed out of the nearby fisheries research center's rearing tanks, as only one species was affected. I urge the authorities to conduct a thorough investigation as soon as possible."

Namma Yatri's cab service picks up pace

Around Rs 6.5 crore generated from more than 2.2 lakh trips since its launch a month ago

| Rachana Ramesh
c-rachana.ramesh
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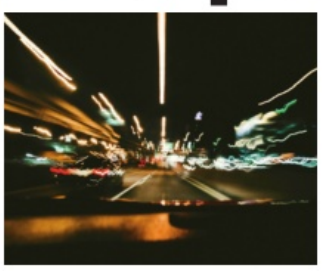
It has been a month since Namma Yatri, the open-mobility application which has garnered much attention for employing a commission-free approach by charging drivers a subscription fee instead of taking a percentage of revenue from rides, launched its cab services. Namma Yatri revealed to Bangalore Mirror that so far, they have been able to generate about Rs 6.5 crore from more than 2.2 lakh trips and 7,000-8,000 daily transacting users growing at a steady pace. They also noted that over 40,000 cab drivers have been on boarded.

When asked about the subscription charges applied to cab services, Namma Yatri noted that no charges are being levied until October 1. "The specific subscription amounts for each plan will be determined in participative manner with the community and will be introduced post-October 1," a written response from them said.

On the other hand, subscription charges apply to auto rickshaw drivers. "At Namma Yatri, we are committed to creating a ride-hailing ecosystem that benefits both drivers and riders. Our team has been diligently optimising costs to maintain affordability and efficiency. While we've successfully minimised several expenses, infrastructure costs such as maps and servers remain essential to ensure the smooth operation of thousands of daily rides. To support our drivers, we have introduced a Subscription Model with two options: Daily Unlimited and Daily Per Trip. These plans are not only significantly more affordable than those offered by other aggregators but also uphold our core principle of transparency. We are unwavering in our commitment



to zero-commission rides and enabling direct payments from customers to drivers," they said.

The Daily Unlimited Plan amounts to Rs 25 per day where if a driver takes no more than one ride in a day, the plan amount will not be charged for that day. The Daily Per Ride Plan amounts to Rs 3.5 per trip where the maximum charge under the plan is Rs 35 per day, applicable to the first 10 rides only.

When questioned about how the zero-commission model has helped cab drivers in terms of their earnings, Namma Yatri said, "Cab drivers experience a significant boost in income under the zero commission model, earning an additional Rs 700 to Rs 800 per day compared to the other platforms where they pay 25-30% commission. This notable increase in daily earnings mirrors the earning potential of auto drivers who make Rs 300 to Rs 400 more by completing 10 to 12 trips a day." Further, it noted that the zero-commission direct-to-driver model ensures direct payment to drivers, eliminating any delays, arrears, or hidden charges. This immediate and transparent payment process enhances drivers' sense of security and financial stability.

Namma Yatri's cabs offer services such as non-AC mini, AC mini, sedan, and XL cab. "Non-AC mini cab, a unique addition, addresses frequent misunderstandings between drivers and customers regarding AC usage. It sets clear service expectations and competitive pricing for budget-conscious customers while promoting eco-friendly rides. The app will soon introduce inter-city, rentals, scheduled rides, and open up across Karnataka. It will also accommodate special requests like disability-friendly rides, extra luggage, traveling with pets, and trips to public transport hubs," a press release from Namma Yatri during the launch had stated.

Found with mom's body, daughter also dies

An incident in Gopadi village, Kundapur, Udupi has exposed the vulnerability of families dealing with elderly parents and dependent children suffering from mental health issues. On Thursday night, neighbours discovered a foul stench from a house in Gopadi. They attempted to contact Jayanthi Shetty, a 62-year-old woman living alone there with her 32-year-old daughter, Pragathi Shetty. However, the calls went unanswered, and they informed the police. When the police arrived and forced open the door, they saw that Jayanthi had passed away three days earlier and was lying lifeless in her home.

Beside her, Pragathi, who suffers from mental illness, was found unconscious. She had spent those three days lying next to her deceased mother. Pragathi struggled with diabetes and one of her legs had been amputated months ago. Pragathi was rushed to the hospital, but she passed away on Saturday. —PTI

Time for a trim

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

Middle ground

TEC members say they have come up with a middle ground for pollarding a tree. "The number of applications by citizens to axe trees became overwhelming and thus we came up with the option to pollard trees. However, not all tree species can undergo pollarding," said the TEC member. Experts say the high number of cases might also be due to exotic species outnumbering native trees along the city's streets.

"Most of our avenue trees are exotic species that bloom and give fragrance. These are also very fast-growing trees and attain maturity much earlier than native species. Moreover, since they grow fast, their root system is not as strong as native trees such as Neem and Ashoka. Thus, their branches become weaker and more susceptible to breaking and falling during moderate wind speed too," said C Nagarajaiah, professor and ex-head of the Department of Forestry and Environmental Science at the University Of Agricultural Sciences (GKVK), Bengaluru.

Last but not least, the large number of infrastructure projects being executed mindlessly are also weakening avenue trees, leading to higher cases reaching canopy management units.

"Poor urban planning is a major cause behind this destruction. Development work and infrastructure projects are being taken up in a big way with minimal regard to the city's green cover. Avenue trees sustain root damage owing to development activities such as road widening, flyover construction, metro track extension, etc. The density and circumference of a tree's canopy are always proportional to its underground part. However, we are not providing enough space for the root system to grow and strengthen, leading to weak avenue trees and branches," said Ravindra Reshme, a city-based botanist.

NOTES FROM THE FIELD

Reading matters

Education Minister Madhu Bangarappa and his elder brother Kumar Bangarappa have been engaged in a public feud for some time now, often taking jabs at each other whenever possible. In a recent incident, Kumar poked fun at Madhu's proficiency in reading Kannada. During a press conference, Madhu acknowledged that he faced challenges in reading Kannada. However, he emphasised that he could speak Kannada fluently and confidently. Madhu also said that he made this admission during the press conference knowing that his brother would watch the video and use it to make critical statements about him. He also took a jibe at the trolls saying that they were jobless and this was the reason they were roasting his speech on social media.

Prajwal case: Probe is in progress

When questioned about the investigation into Prajwal's case and the allegations raised by former CM HD Kumaraswamy, Home Minister G Parameshwara stated that the investigation was progressing rapidly. He refrained from providing details to the press, expressing surprise at baseless statements being made by the former CM and others regarding the investigation. He said that only he and the CM were briefed by the SIT investigators, raising concerns about the validity of external comments on the matter. While acknowledging the tendency of opposition parties to make allegations, the Home Minister underscored his duty and responsibility in handling such sensitive matters.

Bus theft

Vehicle theft is not uncommon, but theft of a bus is undoubtedly a challenging feat. However, instances of bus thefts have occurred in the past, with some thieves being apprehended shortly after the act. In a recent incident, a bus owned by the city's armed forces became the target of a daring thief. However, his audacious attempt to steal it was short-lived as he was swiftly apprehended and subsequently arrested.

Good Samaritan

In a surprising twist, actor-turned-social worker Vinod Raj has taken up the mantle of solving the persistent pothole problem. Using his own funds, Vinod Raj took it upon himself to fill the potholes along the Nelamangala to Soladevanahalli route. Reflecting on his decision, he mentioned witnessing numerous accidents and difficulties due to these potholes. Vinod Raj decided to invest his own money to repair the road, driven by personal experience rather than external requests.

Roadside fishing

Karnataka had been anxiously awaiting rainfall following a failed monsoon and pre-monsoon showers this year. However, May has taken a dramatic turn, bringing downpours to many parts of the state and causing artificial floods. In Chikkamagaluru, the rain transformed roads into rivers, leading to an unexpected sight. With streets submerged, locals parked their vehicles and took to fishing on the flooded roads. It was quite a spectacle to see people catching fish with their bare hands. —Sridhar Vivan

‘We should be proud of this journey we are having’

RCB wicketkeeper-batter Dinesh Karthik reflects on inspirational turnaraound

After Royal Challengers Bengaluru (RCB) sealed the final playoff berth despite a dismal start of their IPL 2024 campaign, wicketkeeper-batter Dinesh Karthik reflected upon the Faf du Plessis-led side’s inspirational turnaround in the league and said, “people will remember this team for decades”.

After reeling at the bottom of the table in the first half of the tournament, RCB made a sensational comeback as they won their last six matches to finish their league stage campaign in the final-four with 14 points. In their first eight games, they only won a single game against Punjab Kings.

Speaking in the RCB dressing room after the win, Karthik said the players should be proud of them for putting up a competitive show in the latter stage of the cash-rich league.

“We should be really proud of this journey we are having. People will always remember certain journeys. The way we have come back after eight games, we needed to win six, people will remember this team,” Karthik told the RCB dressing room. “Every year in this tournament, when you hit the seven-game mark, there will be one or two teams which would have probably won one or two and they will look to us and say, ‘RCB did it. That was special. We are going to try and repeat what RCB did.’ And that is what we all play cricket for, sport for, where people follow us and believe us that they can do something special. It is hard. It is not going to be easy, I can tell any team that. What we have achieved today is very, very special. We should be really proud of ourselves, winning six out of six,” he added.

Royal Challengers Bengaluru players acknowledge fans as they celebrate after winning their IPL 2024 cricket match against Chennai Super Kings, at M Chinnaswamy Stadium in Bengaluru, Saturday

Can’t express feelings: Dayal

Following his side’s playoff qualification with a win over Chennai Super Kings (CSK), Royal Challengers Bengaluru (RCB), pacer Yash Dayal expressed how teammate Mohammed Siraj helped him off the field and reflected on his journey as a player with the Red and Gold franchise.

Dayal proved to be the star for RCB, defending 11 runs in the last over against MS Dhoni and Ravindra Jadeja, getting Dhoni’s prized wicket, which helped his team reduce CSK to 191/7, 10 runs below the score of 201 runs that CSK had to make in order to reach the playoffs. RCB won the game by 27 runs while defending a total of 219 runs. From winning only one game in their first eight games to winning the next six successive games, RCB completed a brilliant turnaround in the season to reach the playoffs.

In a video posted on the Indian Premier League (IPL) official X handle, Dayal said, “I cannot express my feeling in words. When I threw that last ball, I do not know what happened later. It was a roller coaster ride. I had to keep my emotions aside. I kept myself calm. Virat came to me and talked to me. I just had to execute well. This all works as a youngster.” “Siraj has helped me a lot off the field. He is an inspiration. I am glad to be a part of this team,” he added. **-Agencies**

Rohit slams broadcasters for privacy breach

SPORT

India skipper Rohit Sharma on Sunday lashed out at the IPL broadcasters for “breaching” cricketers’ privacy by recording their conversations with friends and colleagues at training and on match days and then telecasting the contents.

Rohit expressed his disappointment after a video involving him and Kolkata Knight Riders assistant coach Abhishek Nayar, in which the former is seen contemplating his future at the Mumbai Indians, went viral.

“The lives of cricketers have become so intrusive that cameras are now recording every step and conversation we are having in privacy with our friends and colleagues, at training or on match days,” Rohit posted on X.

He added, “Despite asking Star Sports to not record my conversation, it was and was also then played on air, which is a breach of privacy.”

“The need to get exclusive content and focused only on views and engagement will one day break the trust between the fans, cricketers and cricket. Let better sense prevail.”

Rohit was seen making a request to the broadcasters to shut down the audio while recording him after his chat with Nayar. The conversation between the two took place after MI’s IPL fixture against KKR on May 11.

The audio of the chat was posted by KKR on their social media handle and fans assumed that the cricketer is speaking about leaving MI after the ongoing season. Following the controversy, the video was taken down by the Knight Riders’ social media team. A few days after that, on May 17, Rohit was again seen having a chat with Dhawal Kulkarni ahead of MI’s fixture against Lucknow Super Giants. Seeing himself being recorded, the opener, with folded hands, requested the broadcaster to turn off the audio as one has got him into trouble. **-PTI**

BM Finance Fundas

Consumer Connect Initiative

New rule for EPF death claim: Physical claims can be processed without seeding Aadhaar

The Employees’ Provident Fund Organisation (EPFO) stated that it has received specific references from field offices indicating that they are unable to seed and authenticate Aadhaar in cases of death of EPF members. In such cases, filed officers were unable to process the aforementioned physical claims, which resulted in an unnecessary delay in the timely disbursement of payments to the affected claimants, the EPSO stated in a circular issued on May 17, 2024.

Note that Aadhaar details cannot be updated or corrected after a member passes away, which presents challenges for the field offices.

What are the issues EPF field offices faced

The delay would occur in case of inaccurate/incomplete member details in Aadhaar, unavailability of Aadhaar in respect of pre-Aadhaar death cases, deactivated Aadhaar, technical error in validating Aadhaar from UIDAI database, etc.

What is the solution

Consequently, it has been decided that going forward, in all such death cases, processing physical claims without seeding Aadhaar may be permitted as a temporary measure, but only with the proper approval of the OIC in an e-office file duly recording the details of verification done to confirm the deceased’s membership and the genuineness of the claimants. Preventing any fraudulent withdrawals can be done in addition to other due diligence measures that that the OIC deems appropriate.

Who is it applicable for?

The above instructions would apply only to those cases where the details of the member are correct in UAN but inaccurate/incomplete in Aadhaar database. According to the EPFO circular dated May 17, 2024, “Wherever, the data in Aadhaar are correct but inaccurate/incomplete in UAN, the instructions issued in Para 6.9 and 6.10 of JD SOP version-2 dated 26.03.2024 will be strictly adhered to by the field offices to rectify the data in the UAN, seed & validate/authenticate the Aadhaar so as to comply with the instructions as issued in the earlier Circular dated 24.09.2020 vide reference, without any deviation whatsoever.”

Death of member without Aadhaar

As per the JD SOP version-2 dated 26.03.2024, “ In case of the death of a member without an Aadhaar, then the nominee’s Aadhaar will be saved in the system, and the nominee may be allowed to sign the JD form. Other processes will remain the same. There may be cases where the deceased member has not filed a nomination during his lifetime. In the absence of a valid nomination, one of the family members/legal heirs of the member may be allowed to attest the JD and submit his/her Aadhaar with the consent of other family members/ legal heirs.”

-Sneha Kulkarni, ET Online

Rain hits city, some areas in pain already

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

(SWD) nearby overflowing. The water stood at knee length, affecting parked private vehicles and stray animals. Many residents also made an allegation that the water continues to run through the premises, even when there are no showers, as the SWD is not in its natural course of way and is yet to be completely diverted.

"The water has reached the stairs of our home. It is sewage and has also made its way into our sumps, resulting in our fresh water sources becoming contaminated. Our sewage treatment plants (STP) are also blocked. We're only left with a few mugs of water that can be used to brush teeth," a resident said. She noted that the issue has been consistently raised with relevant authorities including the municipal body, BWSSB and the forest department within the BBMP, since they experienced the same issue during previous monsoons. However, authorities have not responded adequately.

Another resident noted that they have had to temporarily move to a relative's house in order to escape the inconvenience. "The situation is so severe prior to the beginning of the monsoon. It is likely going to get worse. We have bought these villas with our hard earned money and the government needs to intervene to ensure that we are able to live within them," she said, adding that appeals have been made to the BBMP chief commissioner as well as the chief minister.

Residents say that initially the BBMP and BWSSB blamed the matter on each other. "Now, the BBMP has to connect the pathway to the nearest lake and requires permission from the forest wing. However, since it is not just rainwater flowing, it is unlikely for them to accept the request. It is wrong to allow sewage coming from nearby apartments to enter into the lake as it will affect its ecosystem. We have been told that the original pathway of the SWD runs through 'private land'. We do not whose land the authorities are trying to protect at our cost," a resident said.

BBMP issues directions for dangerous trees clearance

Keeping in mind the consequences heavy winds and spells of rain will have on trees that are weak, BBMP has requested residents to report vulnerable trees whose fall may lead to serious damage. It has put out a WhatsApp number for each of the zones, which can be contacted to send the location and other necessary details of the tree.

WHATSAPP NUMBER FOR EACH OF THE ZONES

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Bengaluru West: 9449659252
Bengaluru South: 9480685039
Bommanahalli: 9580685399/9480685399
Dasarahalli: 9164042566
RR Nagar: 7760553545/9880516322
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I Srijan Kakhandaki S/O, Shivakumar Kakhandaki R/o Flat E403, Shilpitha Splendour Annex, Chinnappa Layout, Mahadevpura, Banglore-48 have changed my name to Srijan Shivakumar Kakhandaki.

I Arundhathi Suri Chenraj W/O, Late. Suri Chenraj R/o No 299, 5th Main, Near Wipro Park, 1st Block Koramangala Bengaluru - 560034 Karnataka have changed my name to Arundhati Suri Chenraj.

I Ravi S/O Raja R/o 2p94+hmr, Sannatammanahalli, Krishnarajapura, Bengaluru, Karnataka 560049 have changed my name to Rehman Sheriff R for all purposes.

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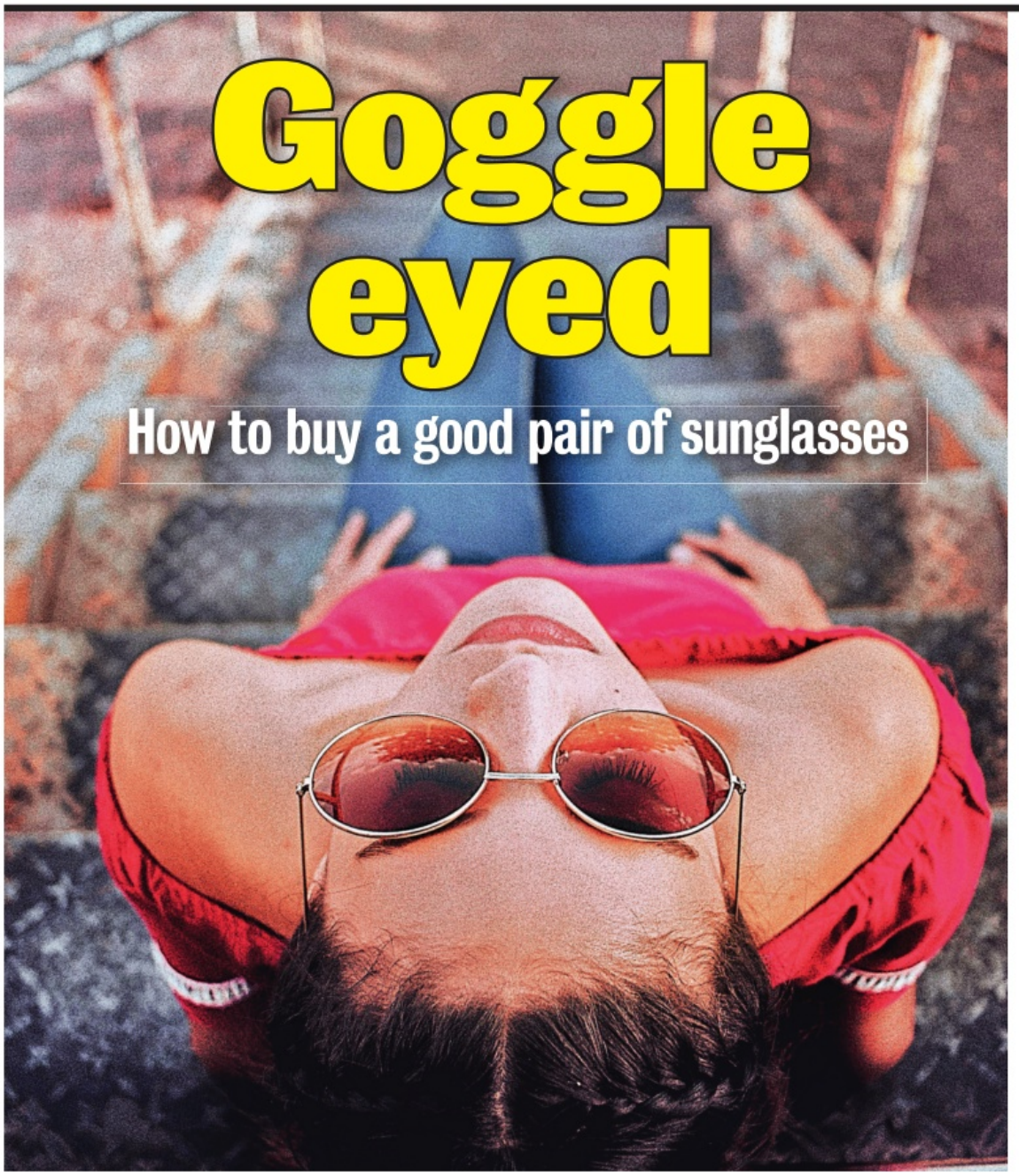
Goggle eyed

How to buy a good pair of sunglasses



Nowadays you can buy a cheap pair of sunglasses just about anywhere – from supermarkets and petrol stations to corner shops and online fashion retailers, but such ubiquity may prompt doubts as to the protection they can offer.

While their lenses usually meet certain minimum UV protection requirements, their quality in other respects, such as visual clarity, is dismal.

Opticians, however, are governed by national health regulations, meaning that they have to meet higher standards such as the CE and UKCA marks.

Professional opticians are therefore much better equipped to help customers find sunglasses that not only meet their practical demands, but which are also comfortable and well suited to their facial features.

Rules for protection

European law classifies sunglass lenses as "personal protective equipment", outlining five levels of protection. Category 0 lenses allow 80-100 per cent of light through, while those in category 4 only let 3-8 per cent through, meaning they are not suitable for driving. Category 3 is the most commonly used, as they are appropriate for most situations, including driving.

So, do darker lenses protect you better? The short answer is: not necessarily. The degree of light absorption depends on how and where they will be used: category 4 lenses are designed for extremely bright areas like high mountains or deserts, but may actually reduce your visibility in other situations.

However, all sunglasses that meet the established standards will protect your eyes from UV radiation.

Quality of vision

Wearing sunglasses can give the feeling that your vision is impeded. This is because a tinted lens selectively filters light: it lets in one type of radiation and limits another. Three concepts can help us understand how this works, and why it matters.

First up is visual acuity. This is the term used to measure how "sharply" we see, and it is tested by asking patients to read increasingly small letters that appear on a screen or wall chart, with an ideal result around 100 per cent.

However, this test is performed with black letters on a well lit white background, so it does not take into account how visual quality may vary in other lighting conditions.

Contrast sensitivity is defined as the ability to differentiate objects from the surrounding background. It is, for instance, more difficult to distinguish black letters on grey backgrounds than on white backgrounds.

Lastly, we have refractive errors, which affect both visual acuity and contrast sensitivity. These are what cause astigmatisms and make us long or short sighted. Wearing non-prescription sunglasses when suffering from any of these conditions can make vision even worse than it would be without them.

> **Polarised lenses block light that reaches the eye at a certain angle after reflecting off a surface such as a road or water, thus reducing glare**

Colour matters

With all this in mind, we should also address the common question of lens colour. While colour does not affect protection, it can affect contrast and the feeling of brightness, because each colour filters out a different wavelength of light.

Grey lenses filter out all wavelengths of light, while tints such as brown or green have a different effect on light absorption. This means that visual perception tends to be brighter through a brown lens, very dark through grey ones, and more natural through green ones.

Plastic or glass lenses?

Colour isn't the only thing that affects quality of vision: we also have to pay attention to what the lenses are made of. While they are most commonly made of specialised plastics – known as organic lenses – you can also find glass ones, known as mineral lenses.

These two materials are not the same. Organic lenses are lighter and stronger, while mineral lenses are more scratch resistant and are less prone to colour distortion. This means that mineral lenses offer greater quality of vision.

What about polarised lenses?

Polarised lenses block light that reaches the eye at a certain angle after reflecting off a surface such as a road or water, thus reducing glare. They are particularly suited to driving or spending time around water.

However, they can be unsuitable in certain situations. For example, they block light from screens, making them appear darker or even completely black, meaning devices often have to be rotated to improve visibility. They are also not ideal for certain winter sports: by eliminating glare they make it very easy to miss icy patches on the ground.

Other features

Lastly, there are certain design features that we cannot overlook when choosing a pair of sunglasses.

Gradient lenses are darker at the top, and graduate down to a lighter tint at the bottom – they usually absorb around 85 per cent of light in their darkest area, and 10 per cent in the lightest.

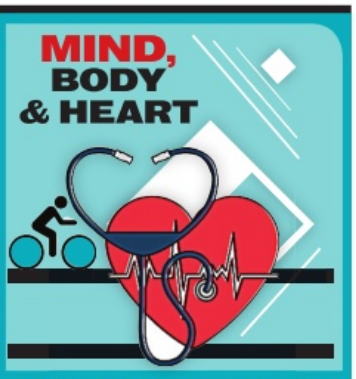
These lenses are stylish, but that does not affect their protection against UV rays. That said, they might be better suited to cloudy conditions, and on a bright summer day they may not be the best option.

Reflective lenses have a layer on their outer surface that reflects light and enhances protection. Unfortunately, this treatment is easily damaged or scratched.

Lenses with anti reflective coating on the inside of the lens provide greater clarity of vision by eliminating light reflected from behind the wearer. This treatment is usually applied to large sunglasses, or glasses with optically very high quality lenses.

In the event of any doubt, the best possible advice is to speak to your optician or optometrist to find the sunglasses that best meet your needs.

(By Jacobo García Queiruga and Verónica Noya Padín, The University of Santiago de Compostela, The Conversation)



All you need to know about...

Exercise routine

Identify Your Why
Why do you want to exercise? Whether it's improving your health, boosting your mood, or achieving specific fitness goals, having a clear and compelling why can serve as powerful motivation. Write down your reasons and revisit them whenever you feel tempted to skip a workout.

One Step At A Time
Instead of overwhelming yourself with intense workouts, begin with small, manageable activities. Whether it's a short walk, a brief home workout, or a quick yoga session, taking small steps allows you to build a positive association with exercise without feeling burdened.

Find What You Like
Exercise doesn't have to mean gruelling sessions at the gym. Discover activities that you genuinely enjoy. Whether it's dancing, hiking, swimming, or playing a sport, incorporating activities you love into your routine can make the entire process more enjoyable.

Create a Routine
TBH, it can't be like one of your New Year's resolutions. You cannot just have a great start, you need to keep it consistent. Establishing a regular exercise routine helps turn physical activity into a habit. Schedule specific times for workouts, making them a non-negotiable part of your day. Over time, your body and mind will adapt to this routine, making it easier to overcome laziness and prioritise exercise.

Workout with a Friend
Everything is better with friends, isn't it? Enlist the support of your buddies. If they are a workout freak, nothing better than that! Knowing that someone is counting on you can be a powerful motivator to get moving, even on days when laziness creeps in.

-Femina

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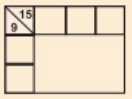
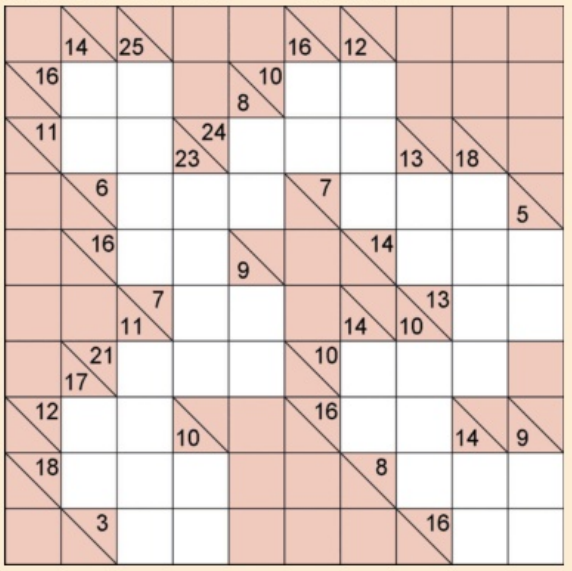
Kakuro

The numbers in the grey squares refer to the sums of the digits that you must fill into the empty spaces directly below or to the right of the grey square containing the number. For instance, in the given example, the 3 boxes horizontally next to 15 must contain 3 digits that add up to 15, whereas

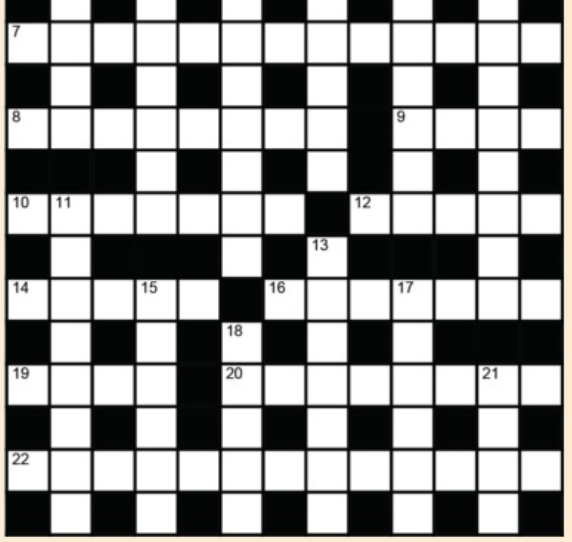


for 9, it is the 2 boxes placed vertically under it that must add up to 9. No zeros are used here, only the digits 1 through 9.

Note: A digit cannot appear more than once in any particular digit combination. For instance, in the example, we cannot have the combination of 4+7+4 for 15.



Quick



ACROSS

7 Bespoke (4,2,7)
8 Half-hearted (4-4)
9 Atop or over (4)
10 ___ with : burdened a person with? (7)
12 Whetstones for sharpening (5)
14 The Earth? (5)
16 Most gentle and soft-hearted? (7)
19 Ex-India all-rounder __ Ali (4)
20 Take after (8)
22 Specialist in skin diseases (13)

DOWN

1 Capital of Azerbaijan (4)
2 Protect or safeguard (6)
3 Written musically (7)
4 Considers (5)
5 Portuguese money formerly (6)
6 Romantic singers (8)
11 Spoke without preparation (8)
13 Projectile (7)
15 Karnataka tourist destination known for its sculptures and red sandstone cliffs (6)
17 Injure or harm (6)
18 Banal or hackneyed (5)
21 Was bested (4)

Quoteuncode

This puzzle is a substitution cipher in which one letter stands for another. If you think that Q equals C, it will equal C throughout the puzzle. Single letters, short words and words using an apostrophe give you clues to locating vowels. Solution is by trial and error.

Today's CLUE: Q EQUALS S

CAR BDFV LFKUR IARHR QNU-URQQ UBYRQ PRWBHR IBHT EQ K MEUCEBDKHV.

Linemaro

My friend thinks you are cute, but I don't think so. I think you are gorgeous

Mindchow

God does not create a lock without its key, or problems without its solutions. Trust him

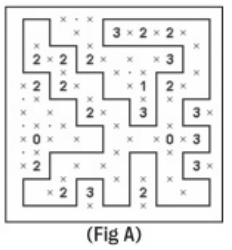
Joke of the day

I've only been wrong once, and that's when I thought I was wrong

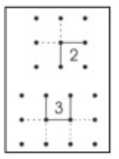
Loop

Rules

» Connect adjacent dots with vertical or horizontal lines, creating a single loop (Fig A). » Crossovers or branches are not allowed (As shown by dotted lines in Fig B). » Numbers in the puzzle indicate the number of lines that should surround it, while empty cells may be surrounded by any number of lines. » You can't draw lines around zeros. » Each puzzle has just one unique solution.



(Fig A)

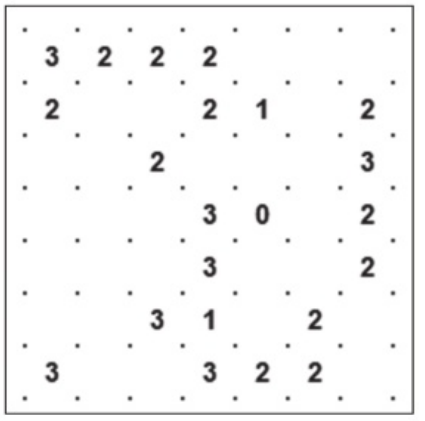


(Fig B) Not Allowed

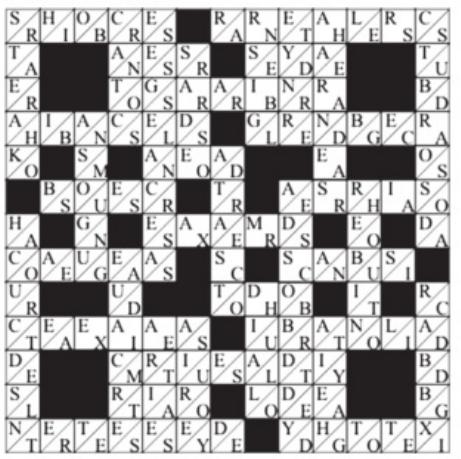
How to begin:

Example (Fig A) – Begin with the zero next to 3. Since no lines can be drawn around zero, mark crosses around it, as shown. Now there is a cross in one space around 3. So we know the three lines of 3 can only be drawn in the remaining three spaces. Next, these lines can only be extended in one direction each. Continue, using the same logic.

Hints: Keep eliminating possibilities by marking crosses in spaces between dots where a line isn't possible, i.e., if you have already completed required lines or where a line extension may create a branch or cause a dead-end (Fig B)



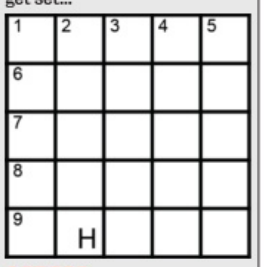
Strikeout



This crossword has no clues and the answer is there waiting for you. All you have to do is find it in each square. You have a choice of two letters, one of which you must strike out. If you choose correctly, you will be left with a grid that contains real words.

Fast five

How long do you think it will take you to unscramble the ten words shown below and fit them correctly into the grid in the order given one letter has already been entered to get you started? on your marks, get set...



ACROSS

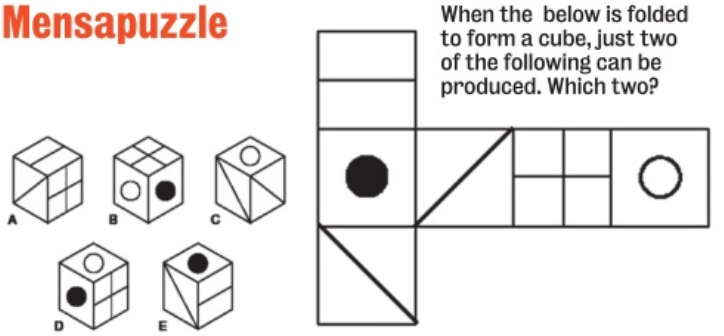
1 Less I; 6 Natch;
7 NY nut; 8 Sues I;
9 Cash I

DOWN

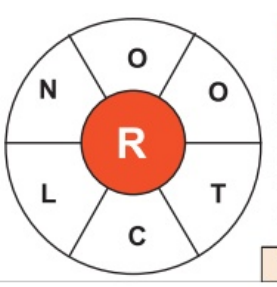
1 CCI it; 2 Sush H;
3 Nasal; 4 In une;
5 St yes

Mensapuzzle

When the below is folded to form a cube, just two of the following can be produced. Which two?



Bull's eye



How many words of four or more letters can you make from the letters shown? Every word must contain the central letter. There should be one seven-letter word. British English Dictionary is used as a reference.

03 Average; **04** Good; **05** Outstanding

SudokuChallenge

		4	8		7	6		
6		2		9		5		7
1								9
	9		1	6	4		2	
	2		5	7	8		1	
3								2
2		6		1		4		5
		5	2		6	8		

To solve a Sudoku puzzle, every digit from one to nine must appear in each of the nine vertical columns, in each of the nine horizontal rows and in each of the nine boxes.

Gofigure

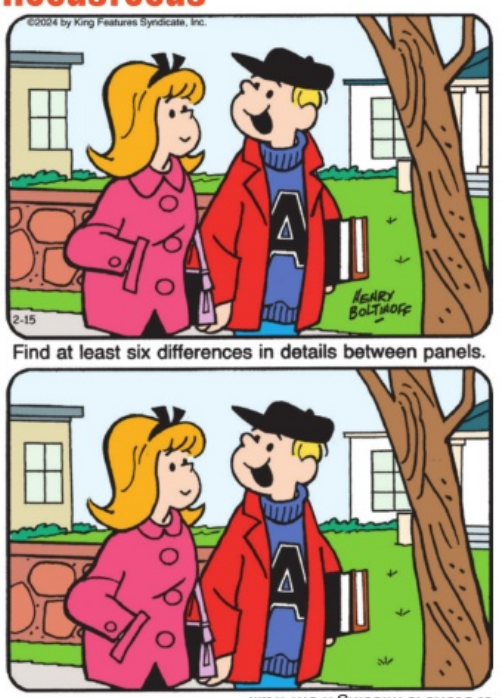
Place the four numbers in the first, third, fifth, and seventh boxes and whatever operators you care to use in the second, fourth, and sixth boxes in the correct order to get the answer. Use the numbers only once.

Easy = 30
6 6 9 9

Medium = 36
5 7 8 9

Hard = 30
4 7 9 5

Hocusfocus



Find at least six differences in details between panels.

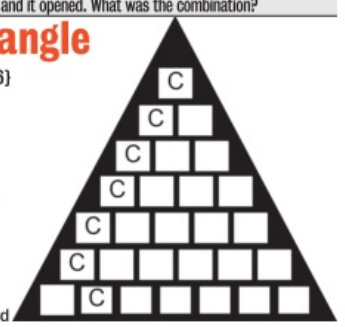
Differences: 1. Column is missing. 2. Label is missing. 3. Pocket is lower. 4. Collar is smaller. 5. Building is different. 6. Stone is missing from wall.

Riddler

After Andrew had been sick for a week, he asked his best friend Jesse to get his books out of his locker. Instead of telling Jesse the three number combination Andrew said he kept a small piece of paper with the combination under his locker door. After school Jesse went to Andrew's locker and pulled the paper. On the paper was written: 4 24 22 9 9 9 9 22 24 22 9 9. Thinking this would be easy but a little tedious, Jesse entered in every arrangement of 24, 22, and 9 there was without the lock opening. Realizing there was something behind these numbers that he wasn't noticing, Jesse sat down for a few minutes to think it out. After ten minutes of intense thinking, Jesse went to the locker, entered the combination into the lock and it opened. What was the combination?

Alpha triangle

1 Atomic number (6)
2 Company, abbr.
3 Felon
4 Toe woe
5 Close friend
6 Coloured pencil
7 Word made from initial letters



Beginning at the top move towards the bottom seven-letter word by adding a letter at each step and rearranging. A correct and different word must be made at each step answering to the clue given.

DIFFICULT TO SOLVE? FIND THESE SOLUTIONS ON THE NEXT PAGE

COMICS

Popeye

Bizarrotrip

Children who don't memorize state capitals limit their future success at pub trivia.
Wayno & Piraro 2-15-24
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Diamond Lil

Hart of the city

OUT THERE! THERE'S A WORLD OUTSIDE OF YONKERS
HEY! YOU'VE GOT SHOW TUNES!
"HELLO, DOLLY!" IS ONE OF MY FAVORITE MUSICALS.
MINE TOO!
PUT ON YOUR SUNDAY CLOTHES. THERE'S LOTS OF WORLD OUT THERE!
HEART OF THE CITY © 2024 ANDREWS MCMEEL
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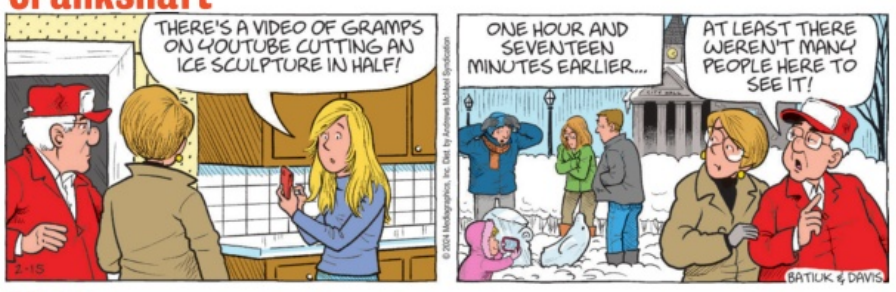
Crankshaft


THERE'S A VIDEO OF GRAMPS ON YOUTUBE CUTTING AN ICE SCULPTURE IN HALF!
ONE HOUR AND SEVENTEEN MINUTES EARLIER...
AT LEAST THERE WEREN'T MANY PEOPLE HERE TO SEE IT!
2-15
BATIUK & DAVIS

Mutts

EARL, I'VE BEEN WORKING ON A VALENTINE POEM FOR MY SHNELLY.
ROSES ARE RED. VIOLETS ARE BLUE.
...AND...!?!
I SAID I WAS "WORKING" ON IT!!!
mutts.com
2/15

WHAT YOUR STARS SAY TODAY

Aries Mar 21 – Apr 20
Today, you must control your way of speaking. Be careful regarding hidden enemies and opponents, as you may become a victim of conspiracy. It is advised to avoid making investments in risky assets and to refrain from lending money to anyone, as it may not be recoverable easily. Practising meditation and yoga can help alleviate stress.

Taurus Apr 21 – May 20
Today, you might struggle with negative thoughts. Impatience and arrogance could hinder your decision-making. Seeking the blessings of your elders will be beneficial for your professional growth. Avoid investing in dead assets, and love birds should steer clear of discussing past negative experiences.

Gemini May 21 – Jun 21
Today, you are in a strong position against your opponents and hidden enemies. You may recover money that was previously stuck. Your professional performance will be excellent. It's an important day for love birds and singles to make significant decisions regarding marriage.

Cancer Jun 22 – July 23
Today is a good day for you. The difficulties of the last week are over, and you can start on postponed projects. You may be rewarded for your hard work, boosting your confidence. There may be financial gains in your business, especially for those in export, import, fashion, and dairy products.

Leo Jul 24 – Aug 23
Today, you may feel dull and experience health issues. Overworking your mind might lead to tiredness, affecting your domestic harmony. You may arrive late to social or family gatherings. Avoid investing in new business ventures, as losses are possible. Love birds should avoid controversies.

Virgo Aug 24 – Sep 23
Today, you are blessed by the moon, allowing you to make new business plans. Your colleagues will support you in implementing these plans. You may recover stuck money from clients, improving business liquidity. However, after late evening, you might feel some depression, affecting your sleep.

Libra Sep 24 – Oct 22
Today, you have control over your opponents and hidden enemies. Legal decisions may come in your favour. Your hard work will be recognised by your seniors, possibly leading to new responsibilities or a promotion. Singles may find a soulmate.

Scorpio Oct 23 – Nov 22
Today, you will feel happy and might plan to buy creative items to improve your lifestyle. You may spend on friends and family and consider investing in assets. Singles may find good matches, and love birds will enjoy special moments together.

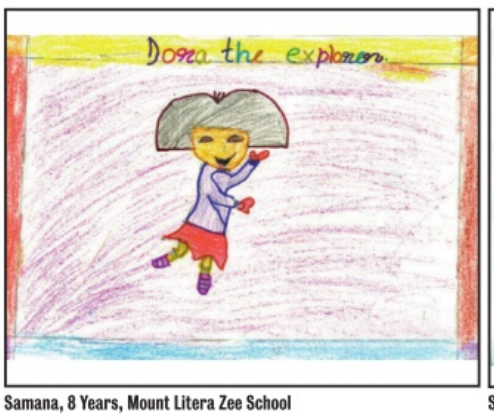
Sagittarius Nov 23 – Dec 22
Today, you may seek peace of mind, but the moon's blessings will help you stay focused. Avoid investments in property and other assets. You may experience happy moments in your domestic life but should avoid arrogance and ego with your spouse. Disputes with business partners are likely to be resolved.

Capricorn Dec 23 – Jan 20
Today, your politeness will help resolve many issues. You will find a balance between savings and expenditures, boosting your savings. You may spend on creative items to renovate your house.

Aquarius Jan 21 – Feb 19
Today, you are advised to control your speech within the family, as loose talking may disrupt family harmony. Avoid spending money on worthless items just to maintain social status, and keep a close watch on your finances. Health-wise, you may face issues related to ears, teeth, and throat.

Pisces Feb 20 – Mar 20
Today looks promising for you. Your vitality and health are strong, and you may find joy in both work and home life. Positive partnerships could lead to business benefits, while job seekers may discover promising opportunities. However, lovebirds should steer clear of discussions about self-respect issues.

KIDZONE



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Sanjanaa V, 5 Years, DRDO KG School

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SOLUTIONS

RIDDLER 28, 4, 17.
Writing the 24th letter of the alphabet for each 24, the 22nd letter of the alphabet for each 22, and the 9th letter of the alphabet for each 9 reveals: XXVIIIIVXVII. It is now clear that the combination is written in Roman Numerals. The only set of 5 Roman Numerals that fits this arrangement is: XXVIII IV XVII or 28, 4, 17.

SOLVE IN 1M
(2/3) x 9 + (2/3) x 9
2 x 3 + 2 x 3
6 + 6
= 12

FAST FIVE

C	H	A	I	S
I	S	S	U	E
T	U	N	N	Y
C	H	A	N	T
I	S	L	E	S

STRIKE OUT

S	H	O	R	E		A	N	T	H	E	R	S		
T		A	S	S		E	Y	E		U				
E		T	S	A	R	I	N	A		B				
		E	D		L	E	D	G	E	R				
		S	E	D		L	E	A	R	S				
D	H	O	T		T	A	R		L	E	A	B		
					C	R	U	E	L	T	Y		B	
				T	A	X	I	E	S		U	R	A	N
				C	A	G	E	S		C	A	B	S	
				A	N		E	X	A	M	S		O	A
				B	O	S	C		R		E	R	R	I
				K	M		N	E	D			E		O
				A	B	A	S	E	D		L	E	D	G
				E		T	S	A	R	I	N	A		B
				T		A	S	S		E	Y	E		U

QUICK

MENSA PUZZLE
A and E

BULL'S EYE
CONTROL, corn, croon, root, torn

QUOTE UNCODE
The only place where success comes before work is a dictionary.

SUDOKU

9	5	4	8	2	7	6	3	1
6	3	2	4	9	1	5	8	7
1	7	8	6	5	3	2	4	9
5	9	7	1	6	4	3	2	8
4	2	3	5	7	8	9	1	6
8	6	1	9	3	2	7	5	4
3	4	9	7	8	5	1	6	2
2	8	6	3	1	9	4	7	5
7	1	5	2	4	6	8	9	3

ALPHA TRIANGLE
C, Co, Con, Corn, Crony, Crayon, Acronym.

GO FIGURE
Easy
9 + 6 + 6 + 9 = 30
Medium
7 + 5 – 8 x 9 = 36
Hard
9 + 4 – 7 x 5 = 30

LOOP

KAKURO

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